Biography of August William Schachtschneider, 1912-1968 Rock County, Wisconsin

Biography of August William "Bill" Schachtschneider

Life on the farm

On a partly cloudy summer day, Friday, 12 July 1912, August William (Bill) Schachtschneider was born on a rented farm outside of Milton Junction in the township of Fulton to August John and Emilie Stark Schachtschneider, both German immigrants. At the time of his birth Bill had 2 older brothers, Harold "Mike" (15) and Carl "Ike" (14), and 3 adoring older sisters, Ann (10), Edna (8) and Louise (4). August went by "Bill" throughout his life. His daughter, Gena, called him "daddy Billy baby" when she was little.

August William Schachtschneider, undated photo, in collection of the author

Bill was baptized at St. John's Lutheran Church in Janesville, Wisconsin on 20 October 1912. The sponsors for his baptism included his uncle William (Wilhelm) Schachtschneider, William's daughter, Aline Schachtschneider, and Wilhelm Craft. Bill's given name in the register was August Wilhelm Schachtschneider.[1]

In 1912 it was expected that laundry for a family of 8 would take a good part of a day to wash by hand, hang to dry, patch and iron. The farm did not have electricity. Most of rural America did not get electricity until the mid-1930's. Most roads would have been dirt. Horses would be used for most farm work and for transportation. In the winter a sleigh was used when the snow was deep. A very fond memory for Louise Emily Schachtschneider was the snowy day that her father picked her up from school with a horse and sleigh.

Pictured in this photo are: (L-R) Paul Zesiger; Edna Schachtschneider; Carl Schachtschneider; AW (Bill) Schachtschneider (child); Hattie Zesiger; Albert Zesiger; ca. 1916. Photo in collection of the author.

[1] Kirchen Buch, St. John Lutheran Church, Janesville, Rock, Wisconsin, Baptismal record, August Wilhelm Schachtschneider, 14 Jul 1912, page 54; digital image, U.S. Evangelical Lutheran Church in America Church Records, 1781-1969, *Ancestry* (https://ancestry.com: accessed 29 Oct 2021).

Bill attended school, grade 1-8, at the Paul School.[2] The Paul School operated from 1873-1961 and was located on land owned by William Paul. The school was located across the road about ¼ mile north of the farm on which the Schachtschneiders lived on the northeast corner of Newville and Town Line Road. William Paul also owned the Schachtschneider's rented farm.

August William Schachtschneider Dated 11 FEB 1926. Photo in collection of the author.

Bill is standing on the right. Undated photo. Photo in collection of the author.

The home was heated by a stove that burned wood. Louise Schachtschneider talked often about waking in the morning to water frozen in the wash bowl in their bedroom because the wood stove would not have been stoked all night. All cooking would have been done on this stove as well. Water would have come from a well. An outhouse was located in the rear or to the side of the farmhouse.

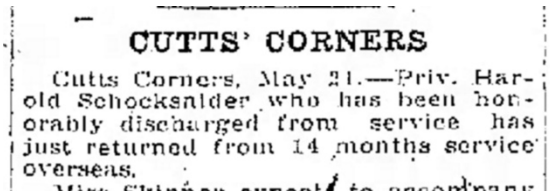
When Bill was older he would have had chores to complete. Typical activities that were expected of the men and boys on a farm in this era would include building and maintaining the home, out buildings and fences, planting, tending and harvesting crops, putting by seed, caring for livestock and butchering meat, and possibly hunting. Crops would probably have included hay to feed livestock and straw for livestock bedding, corn and possibly oats. Tobacco was also grown on this farm and on many farms in Rock County. The Schachtschneiders had a large vegetable garden to feed the family as well.

[2] This information was given to me by Bill's sister, Louise Emily Schachtschneider Koch.

In the 1920 U.S. Federal Census it was noted that Edna, 16, Louise, 12, and August, 8, were all attending school.[3] Bill's brothers, Harold, 24, and Carl, 22, were both employed on the farm. Ann, 18, was working on the farm alongside her mother.

The 1930 U.S. Federal Census shows that Bill still lives on the rented farm, located on Town Line Road in Fulton Township.[4] Bill is 17. He and his 32-year-old brother Carl are working as farm laborers for their father. The rest of the children have moved from home. The family owned a radio at the time that the 1930 census was taken indicating that they had electricity. What a difference that must have made in their daily lives.

Harold Schachtschneider was married and living in Janesville with his wife and two children, Margaret and Robert, in 1930.[5] His occupation was noted as "assembler" at the auto factory in town. This census also noted that Harold was a veteran of the World War, now known as World War I.



CUTTS' CORNERS

Cutts Corners, May 21.—Priv. Harold Schocksnider who has been honorably discharged from service has just returned from 14 months service overseas.

"Cutts' Corners", *Janesville Daily Gazette,* 22 May 1919, page 9, col. 2

Harold Albert "Mike" Schachtschneider, WWI; photo in collection of author

Ann Schachtschneider had married Lawrence Randall on 31 December 1923.[6] Ann and Lawrence were living in Janesville in 1930.[7] Louise Schachtschneider was boarding with them and working at the Pen Factory in town (Parker Pen Company).

Edna was married to John Brummond on 29 August 1925.[8] In 1930 Jack and Edna were living on Harding Street in Janesville, as was Harold and his family.[9] Eventually, August John and

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[3] 1920 U.S.Census, Rock County, Wisconsin, population schedule, Fulton Township, enumeration district (ED) 105, sheet 9B, (penned), family 200, Aug. Schackschnid household; digital image, *Ancestry*, (http://www.ancestry.com: accessed 29 Oct 2021); citing NARA microfilm publication T625, roll 2014.

[4] 1930 U.S. Census, Rock County, Wisconsin, population schedule, Fulton Township, enumeration district (ED) 0022, sheet 5B (penned), p. 63 (stamped), dwelling 109, family 112, August Schachtschneider household; digital image, *Ancestry*, (http://www.ancestry.com: accessed 29 Oct 2021); citing NARA microfilm publication T626.

[5] 1930 U.S. Rock County, Wisconsin, population schedule, Janesville City, enumeration district (ED) 0028, sheet 21A (penned), p. 138 (stamped), dwelling 986, family 565, Harold Schachtschneider household; digital image, *Ancestry*, (http://www.ancestry.com: accessed 29 Oct 2021); citing NARA microfilm publication T626.

[6] "Married at Rockford", *Janesville Daily Gazette*, 2 Jan 1924, page 3, col. 2

[7] 1930 U.S. Census, Rock County, Wisconsin, population schedule, Janesville City, enumeration district (ED) 0028, sheet 21A (penned), p. 135 (stamped), dwelling 486, family 565, Harold Schachtschneider household; digital image, *Ancestry*, (http://www.ancestry.com: accessed 29 Oct 2021) citing NARA microfilm publication T626.

[8] "John Brummond", Obituary, *Janesville Daily Gazette*, 27 August 1968, page 2, col. 2

[9] 1930 U.S. Census, Rock County, Wisconsin, population schedule, Janesville City, enumeration district (ED) 0027, sheet 8B (penned), p. 111 (stamped), dwelling 187, family 195, John Brummond household; digital image, *Ancestry* (http://www.ancestry.com: accessed 29 October 2021); citing NARA microfilm publication T626.

Emilie Schachtschneider will also be living on this same street. By 1940 Harding Street in Janesville became a hub of activity for the Schachtschneider family.

The Tornado

Around 5 P.M. on 21 September 1931 a tornado swept through Rock County which hit the farm on Town Line Road.[10] The house, barn, tobacco shed, windmill, and other small buildings were damaged beyond restoration. They lost a complete crop of tobacco. The family was in the house when the tornado approached. Carl shouted for the family to get to the cellar but as he started downstairs the side of the building caved in on him carrying him against the parlor range. The next thing he knew he and his father were out on the lawn. Carl and August Sr. were able to extricate Bill and his mother from the debris of the house. Emilie had a badly cut and mangled head and lost a lot of blood. She stayed at a neighbor's house a few days to recuperate. August, Carl and Bill were badly bruised, and Bill was reported to have lost a part of a finger. There were several news reports across the state about this tornado and the damage it caused. One of the newspaper reports relates that people flocked out to the affected area to see the damage and while there they were plucking the dead chickens to prepare an impromptu meal. Deputies were sent to the area to prevent looting. August Sr. was quoted as saying the following: "That none of the family was killed is a miracle. I was in the kitchen when I felt plaster falling around me. I felt things giving way and thought I was being dropped down into the cellar, but when I came to I was out here in the yard. I feel awful. I'm all bunged up."[11]

Tornado damage, 21 September 1931. The milk house was the only building that was left standing on the August John Schachtschneider farm. Milk cans are scattered on the ground around the building.

Picture from Mary Ellen Brummond Arnold.

Bill was always anxious during storms after this experience. His daughter Mary remembers sitting on the porch at the side of the house on Racine Street watching storms with her dad, always prepared to run to the basement if a tornado threatened.

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[10] "Cyclone Deals Death, Destruction; Sweeps Wide Swath Through County", *Janesville Daily Gazette*, 22 SEP 1931, page 1 and 11; "Woman Still in Bed", *Janesville Daily Gazette*, 24 SEP 1931; "Tornado Sweeps Rock County; One Dead", *Wisconsin Rapids Daily Tribune*, 22 SEP 1931, page 1, col.7.

[11] "Cyclone Deals Death, Destruction. Sweeps Wide Swath Through County", *Janesville Daily Gazette,* 22 September 1931, page 1 and 12.

Damage to the Schachtschneider home following the tornado on 21 June 1931. Note all the people that came from around the area to survey the damage. Looting was a problem following the storm. Postcard in the collection of the author.

The 1940 Federal Census

Where the Schachtschneiders located immediately after the loss of the farm is not known but by 1940 the Schachtschneider family was living at 619 Harding Street in Janesville.[12] They purchased this home in December of 1936.[13] The residents in the house in 1940 included August Sr., Emilie, Carl and August, Jr (Bill). The 1940 census asked where the family had been living in 1935. The information given was that they lived on a farm in the Janesville area. August Sr. was noted as being unable to work, Emilie was performing housework, and Carl and August Jr. were working outside the home. Carl was working as a machinist in a machine shop, but no information is given about where Bill was working in 1940.

The other Schachtschneider children are not far away from their parents. Harold, his wife Margaret, and his two children, Elizabeth, 14, and Robert, 11, were living at 534 Harding Street, a block away from his parents and his sister Edna.[14] Edna and Jack Brummond, along with their 6-year-old daughter Mary Ellen are also living on Harding Street at 724.[15]

Ann and Lawrence Randall are living on Magnolia Street, directly across the Rock River from Harding Street. At that time there was no bridge across the river so the Randalls would have

[12] 1940 U.S. Census, Rock County, Wisconsin, population schedule, Janesville, enumeration district (ED) 53-32, sheet 17B (penned), 619 Harding Street, August Schachtsneider household; digital image, *Ancestry*, (http://www.ancestry.com: accessed 29 October 2021); citing NARA microfilm publication T627, roll 04520.
[13] Warranty Deed, purchase of lot fifteen in block two in Pixley and Shaw's second addition to the city of Janesville, Rock County land records, Rock County Register of Deeds, 21 December 1936, page 601.
[14] 1940 U.S. Census, Rock county, Wisconsin, population schedule, Janesville, enumeration district (ED) 53-32, sheet 18A (penned), 534 Harding Street, Harold Schachtsneider household; digital image, *Ancestry*, (http://www.ancestry.com: accessed 29 October 2021); citing NARA microfilm publication T627, roll 04520.
[15] 1940 U.S. Census, Rock County, Wisconsin, population schedule, Janesville, enumeration district (ED) 53-31, sheet 27B (penned), 724 Harding Street, John Brummond household; digital image, *Ancestry*, (http://www.ancestry.com: accessed 29 October 2021); citing NARA microfilm publication T627, roll 04520.

driven into town and used the bridge on Centerway to access the Harding Street relatives, and Ann's workplace at the Parker Pen Company.[16]

Louise Emily Schachtschneider married Charles "Chick" Hathorn on 14 October 1933. Chick was the brother of Harold's wife, Margaret Hathorn. Louise and Chick were living in Janesville a couple of miles away from Harding Street.[17] Louise and Chick would later divorce and Louise remarried to Carl Koch in 1947.[18]

<u>World War II</u>

Bill enlisted in the U.S. Army 11 March 1942 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin three months after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. He enlisted for the duration of the war. His civil occupation was listed as " Semiskilled chauffeurs and drivers, bus, taxi, truck, and tractor" although it is believed that he was a diesel mechanic prior to enlistment. His height was 68", weight 177#.[19]

Emilie, A. W. and August Schachtschneider Sr., 1942. Photo in collection of author.

At the time of the death of his mother, 16 May 1943, Bill was stationed at Camp Forrest, Tennessee.[20] He was a Private 1st class in the 118th Signal Radio Intelligence Company. It is doubtful that he came home for the funeral.

In the Army he was instructed in the "military way to drive" because part of his assignment was in the "motor pool". The men in the motor pool were trained to drive GMC 2 ½ ton trucks (deuce and a half) that were fitted with radio hutches and were used to pull trailers outfitted with PE-95s. Bill also was the only soldier assigned to maintain the PE-95s, 6-cylinder GMC gasoline engines which drove 115-volt generators used by the Signal Corp to power their

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[16] 1940 U.S. Census, Rock County, Wisconsin, population schedule, Janesville, enumeration district (ED) 53-45, sheet 7B (penned), Family 145, Lawrence Randall household; digital image, *Ancestry*, (http://www.ancestry.com: accessed 29 October 2021); citing NARA microfilm publication T627, roll 04520.

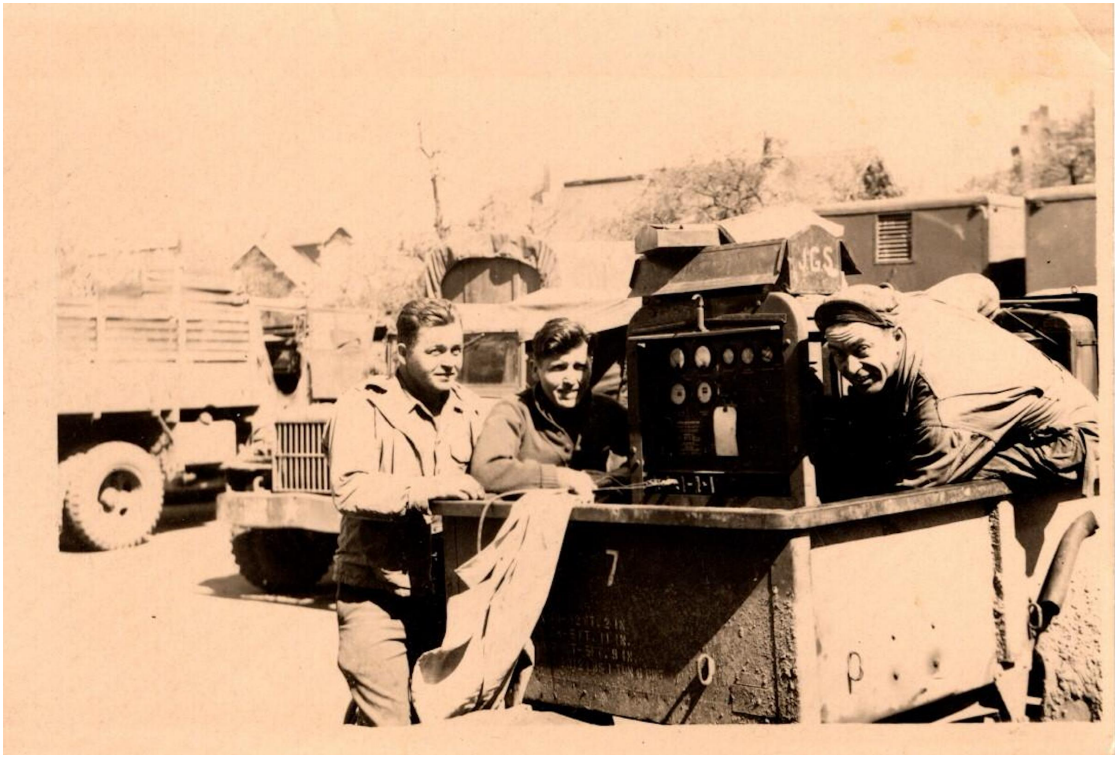
[17] 1940 U.S. Census, Rock County, Wisconsin, population schedule, Janesville, enumeration district (ED) 53-31, sheet 14A(penned), family 314, Charles Hathorn household; digital image, *Ancestry,* (http://www.ancestry.com: accessed 29 October 2021); citing NARA microfilm publication T627, roll 04520.

[18] Iowa Marriage Records, 1880-1937, Carl Koch and Louise Schachtschneider, 21 Jun 1947, *Ancestry* (https://ancestry.com: accessed 11 November 2021)

[19] U.S. World War II Army Enlistment Records, 1938-1946, August Schachtschneider, Jr., Service No. 16049834, *Ancestry, (*https://ancestry.com: accessed 29 October 2021); National Archives at College Park; College Park, Maryland; *Electronic Army Serial Number Merged File, 1938-1946*, Record Group 64; box number 02122, reel 69.

[20] Obituary, Mrs. August Schachtschneider, "Resident of Rock County 50 Years Taken by Death", *Janesville Daily Gazette,* 18 May 1942, page 7

transmitters, receivers, decryption equipment and lights, all necessary for them to receive and decode enemy messages to pass on to the front line of Patton's 3rd Army.[21]



August William "Bill" Schachtschneider, far left, standing near the PE-95 generator he maintained for use by the Signal Radio Intelligence Company attached to Patton's 3rd Army. On the back of the photo it says: Headquarters, Strassen, Luxembourg. The company moved to Strassen 24 December 1944 and were there until 27 March 1945. Picture in collection of the author.

When Bill came home on furlough from the Army his first request was for his sister Edna to fry him some fresh eggs. In the service they were served dried eggs which could not compare. This was a memory of Mary Ellen Brummond, Edna's daughter, who was just 8 years old when her favorite "Uncle Bill" entered the service of his country.[22]

[21] DeGrote, John W., *The 118th Signal Radio Intelligence Company, 1942-1946, Third US Army, World War II,* self-published; copy obtained from The George Marshall Foundation (https://marshallfoundation.org). Unknown publication date, page 24. The information about the unit is from this publication unless otherwise indicated.
[22] Information from notes given to author by Mary Ellen Brummond Arnold's daughter, Barbara Arnold Moksness

Mary Ellen Brummond and Bill Schachtschneider, 1942, probably outside the home of her parents, John and Edna Schachtschneider Brummond, on Harding Street. In collection of the author.

From Left standing: Edna, Bill, Louise Schachtschneider; kneeling: Ann Schachtschneider; 1942; in collection of the author.

Bill was able to return home to stand up for his brother Carl at his wedding to Theresa Mary "Toots" Strunz. The wedding took place 25 May 1943. Carl was inducted into the service 21 July 1942 and was released in October 1943 to work in an essential industry. Carl worked for the Schlueter Company who employed 25 men during the war to work, day and night, each man working 50-60 hours per week, to fill government war production orders.[23] The washers that Schlueter manufactured were designed to clean equipment used to process milk for the WWII Service Camps.

August William "Bill" Schachtschneider and his brother, Carl with Carl's bride, Theresa Mary "Toots" Strunz and Toots's niece, Lucille Lueck, 25 May 1943. In collection of the author.

His return home for Carl's wedding will be the last time he will see his family for two and a half years. The 118th left the U.S. on 18 January 1944 on the S.S. Ocean Mail. The "Ocean Mail" was one of a huge convoy of troop ships that was ringed by destroyers and several aircraft carriers. To allude the enemy the convoy used a zig-zag pattern to cross the Atlantic Ocean. About five or six days out the convoy ran into a huge winter storm which forced the troops to remain below deck except to follow the catwalk to the hold where meals were served. The storm reduced the speed of the ship from 8-10 knots to 2 or 3 knots. The men were squeezed into quarters that were equipped with "Standee bunks" which were sometimes eight tiers high.

[23] Theresa Nguyen, "The Schlueter Company", Rock County Historical Society (https://rchs.us/the-schlueter-company/: accessed 31 October 2021), The Great War Brings Change.

Claustrophobia and seasickness must have competed for the most common illness of the voyage.

Standee bunks similar to those on the "Ocean Mail". Notice two men to a bunk with possibly five more bunks above those pictured.

The "Ocean Mail" sailed into the Firth of Clyde to the harbor at Greenoch, Scotland arriving 29 January 1944, eleven days after their voyage had started. The men immediately boarded trains for transport to Uttoxeter, Staffordshire, England and then in a few days onto Dartford, Kent. There were air raid shelters on the grounds at Dartford which were put into use the second night after arrival. Trying to make their way to the air raid shelters in the pitch dark they were able to hear the drone of approaching bombers. The anti-aircraft batteries commenced fire from all sides of town after dozens of searchlights suddenly lit up the skies. From the shelter the men were able to hear jagged metal pieces, or "flak", of the anti-aircraft shells that had exploded overhead. "These air raids continued at least every other night, sometimes every night, and even several times per night on one occasion" obliging the men of the 118th to realize that they were "living in a war zone with real and constant danger".[24] While stationed in England the company began to intercept German radio messages, becoming fully operational.

While stationed in England Bill's father passed away at the home of his daughter Edna. He was 78 years old at the time of his death, 25 February 1944. It was impossible for Bill to get home to attend his funeral.

Operation Overlord began on 6 June 1944. The job of the 118th, to intercept German radio traffic and identify German army units and their movements, became crucial to the safety of the troops that were part of the D-Day invasion force. A month later, 13 July 1944 the 300-man company left England for a two-day voyage on a miserable Liberty Ship: no kitchen, no bedding, little room to lie down. Arrival on Utah Beach occurred 14 July 1944.

The unit became fully operational in France just a few days later. Each time that "Lucky Forward" (General Patton's field headquarters) moved, the 118th moved the same day and set up operations one to five miles from the headquarters until the war ended. Not only did the 118th intercept German communications they also obtained radio frequencies and call signs through interrogation and captured documents.[25]

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[24] DeGrote, John W., *The 118th Signal Radio Intelligence Company, 1942-1946, Third US Army, World War II,* self-published; copy obtained from The George Marshall Foundation (https://marshallfoundation.org). Unknown publication date, page 10.

[25] Bigelow, Michael E., A Short History of Army Intelligence, *Federation of American Scientists* (https://irp.fas.org/agency/army/short.pdf: accessed 10 November 2021), Page 33

1 August 1944 Patton's 3rd Army became fully operational and the 118th moved their base of operations to Coutances, France.[26] Their next move occurred just four days later when they packed up all their gear on 28 GMC deuce and a halfs and moved seven miles northwest of Avranches, France. They endured a German air raid on an ammunition dump just down the road from their encampment on their first night. Hitler launched a massive counterattack to the north of Avranches (the Mortain counter-offensive) 2 days later.

Between 12 August and 4 September, the company advanced with the 3rd Army experiencing five decampments.[27] A pleasant break to the war occurred in September when men from the 118th were taken to Lucky Forward to see Bing Crosby and Dinah Shore entertain the troops. The conditions for the show were less than ideal with the men sitting on the ground, rifles in hand, or standing for the entire show. Bing and Dinah sang to the troops from the bed of a truck.[28] On Crosby's voyage home he was on the RMS Queen Mary which was fitted out as a troop carrier. He reported that the ship was crammed with servicemen, all of them so tired that they just dropped down anywhere on the deck to sleep.

One move that the 118th made was in blackout conditions. Traveling at 15-20 miles per hour the drivers were given verbal instructions on how to get to their next bivouac at Houdemont, France, just south of Nancy. One driver lost his way and had a harrowing experience with his GMC truck nearly going over a drop off. That truck did finally make its way to meet the 118th. In Houdemont the men were billeted in buildings, finally finished with pup tents for the rest of the war.

24 December 1944 found the 118th camped just outside Strassen, Luxembourg where the 3rd Army was involved at what we now call the Battle of the Bulge. In a little over a month Bradley's 1st Army and Patton's 3rd Army had finally pushed the Germans back eliminating the "bulge". Two months later the company moved into Germany and remained in that country until the war ended on 8 May 1945. The 118th remained operational for five days after the end of the war. The unit moved to Zipf, Austria on 18 August 1945 where, in early October, men started to be sent home. Bill reached New York on the "S.S. Helen Hunt Jackson" on Saturday, 17 November 1945 along with his friend, Louis Roennenberg.[29] Bill returned to the U.S with the following medals: American Theater Area; Good Conduct Medal (two of these); WWII Victory Ribbon; European-African-Middle Eastern Area medal and a Unit Citation for Meritorious Service awarded for service in France between 1 August and 19 November 1944. He also had an arrowhead device to denote an amphibious assault landing and a bronze and two silver service

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[26] See appendix for a list of all company moves and an accompanying map

[27] 25 August 1944 Paris was liberated. The 118th was about 35 miles away from Paris for just five days after it was liberated before moving farther east. Mary Schachtschneider remembers hearing from her mother that Bill was in Paris and dated a French girl. Jeanne told Mary that they saw this young woman's picture on the cover of Harper's Bazaar magazine later.

[28] David Lobosco, "Bing Crosby and the USO", *The Bing Crosby News Archive,* (http://bingfan03.blogspot.com/2010/11/bing-crosby-on-veterans-day.html: accessed 31 October 2021)

[29] "Seven Overseas Vets Return Over Week-end", *Janesville Daily Gazette,* 19 November 1945, page 3, col. 2.

SEVEN OVERSEAS VETS RETURN OVER WEEK-END

Seven Southern Wisconsin men returned to the United States from duty overseas over the week-end. On the Hawaiian Shipper which reached New York Nov. 19 was M/Sgt. Roger Perry, 327 N. Terrace street, Janesville; on the S.S. Helen Hunt Jackson at New York Nov. 17, T/4 August Schachtschneider, Janesville, and T/5 Lewis Roenneburg, Edgerton; on the S.S. John Stevens at New York Nov. 18, Pfc. George Christensen, Elkhorn; on the S.S. Argentina at New York Nov. 16, T/5 William Johnson, Fort Atkinson, and T/5 Kenneth Kruckenberg, Edgerton; on the S.S. Kingston Victory at Boston Nov. 16, Pfc. Walter Sturdivant, Janesville; and on the S.S. Ambrose Burnside at New York Nov. 17, Pfc. Curtis Anderson.

T/4 August Schachtschneider returns from overseas. Janesville Daily Gazette, 19 November 1945, page 3, col. 2

stars. The bronze service star is authorized to be worn on medals and ribbons to denote an additional award or service period. A silver service star replaces five bronze stars.

European-African-Middle Eastern Area Medal with Arrowhead, two Silver Service Stars and one Bronze Service Star awarded to Bill Schachtschneider at the end of WWII. In collection of the author.

Bill's sister, Louise, often told a funny story about his return from the war. They all went out to celebrate at Slick's Bar on Milton Avenue in Janesville. They started a conga line that went outside through the back door of the bar and in through the front door. Slick was at the end of the conga line and when they all got into the building, they locked Slick out. She laughed when she talked about that night. They were all so happy to have Bill home again, and the war over.

After the War

After Bill returned to Wisconsin from the war, he was introduced to Jeanne E. Kauffman by friends. (Louise Schachtschneider Gruenwald said that friends had been talking to Jeanne about Bill quite a while before they met.[30]) Bill's daughter, Mary, remembers Jeanne talking about a date that they went on. Bill took Jeanne to his favorite spot, the Owl's Nest, a bar and restaurant located just north of Milton off old Highway 26. The bar had no inside toilet, only an outhouse. Jeanne, a city girl who had always enjoyed an inside bathroom, thought that that was pretty funny.

A.W. Schachtschneider and Jeanne Kauffman, unknown date. In collection of the author

[30] Louise Gruenwald, "Parental Interview", unpublished paper, undated, written as part of class for graduate school; in collection of author

Bill and Jeanne were married 12 October 1946 at 3 P.M. in the rectory of St. Patrick's Catholic Church in Janesville, Wisconsin by Father Strange.[31] They were married in the rectory because Bill was Lutheran and at the time the Catholic church did not allow Lutherans to be married in the church. (Louise Schachtschneider remembers Jeanne relating how Bill proposed to her. He said he thought that June was a good time for a wedding, but Jeanne said that she was getting married in October. When Bill asked her who she was marrying she said she didn't know, but she would find someone. Bill said, "Why not marry me?") The witnesses to the wedding were Jeanne's sister, Ellen Mae, and her brother, Thomas J. Kauffman (Jid). Following the wedding a supper was served at 508 Chestnut Street, the home of John and Kittie Lee Kauffman, Jeanne's parents. After the supper a reception was held at 8 P.M. at the Labor Temple. The newspaper article about their wedding states that they honeymooned in the south, but their daughter Mary remembers Jeanne saying that they were in Milwaukee for their honeymoon.

At the time of the wedding, Bill was employed by the Rock County Highway Department as a Diesel Mechanic and Welder and he also drove snowplows in the winter. Many a holiday found Jeanne and the children at home while Bill was clearing the roads for travelers. A favorite memory of Gena's is when her dad pulled up to the school playground in his snowplow and stopped just to say "Hello". Jeanne had graduated from the Mercy Hospital School of Nursing, but her place of employment was not mentioned in the wedding announcement.

[31] Kauffman-Schachtschneider, *Janesville Daily Gazette,* 12 October 1946, page 3, col. 2-3

Children Begin to Arrive

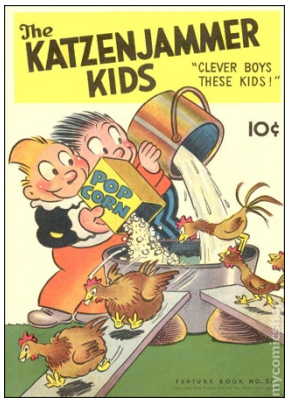
Mary, Louise and Gena Schachtschneider, ca. 1956. In collection of the author.

Three daughters were born to this marriage. Mary Corita (8 July 1948), Gena Rose (29 September 1952) and Louise Ellen (9 May 1954). At the time of Mary's birth the family was living at 473 N. Palm Street, Janesville. In 1952 and 1954, the family address was in a new house at 1509 Hawthorne Avenue, Janesville. After Louise's birth and a hysterectomy Jeanne became depressed compelling the family to move from Hawthorne Avenue back to the Kauffman homestead on Chestnut Street. Jeanne's sister, Ellen Mae, was living in the upstairs apartment and would be available if Jeanne needed anything. After the move to Chestnut Street Jeanne returned to college in Davenport, Iowa to complete her Bachelor's Degree in nursing. Jeanne's mother, Kittie, helped the family out while she was away at school. In the spring of 1960, the family moved to 1206 E. Racine Street, Janesville and lived there until 1970 when Jeanne left Janesville to attend graduate school in Iowa City, Iowa.

Memories of Life on Racine Street

Bill loved to have a beer after work. There was always a case of Pabst in the basement. There was also an old easy chair, a workbench, and tools in his undecorated man-cave. He spent many an hour in the basement. He surely was glad to have a place to go where there weren't any girls.

The basement also housed musical instruments that Bill could play. Among them was a guitar. The presence of his guitar in the basement is what inspired Gena and Louise to take up playing the guitar during their teen years. Although work and family surely got in the way of Bill employing his musical skills, Mary does remember him singing "Tiny Bubbles" to her.



There were always books around the house because Jeanne was a voracious reader, but Bill did not seem to pick those books up. He did share a Katzenjammer Kids comic book one time with Mary. Katzenjammer Kids was an American comic strip created in 1897 and published by different artists until 2006. He didn't read the comic book to Mary, just shared it with her. It was a large comic book, bigger than the ones we know today.

He was very handy and worked hard around the house. He put his skills to work for other family members as well. On one occasion he was painting the apartment at 508 Chestnut Street for the Kauffman parents when he received a call from Jeanne at the home on Racine Street alerting him to a fire that had occurred in the dryer. He and Gena scurried home to assess the damage.

He loved Jeanne's parents and would stop at their home on Academy Street often after work to talk to them. Both of his parents were deceased after his return from WWII so it was a great comfort to have wonderful in-laws like J.B. and Kittie Kauffman.

Since Jeanne was Catholic and Bill was Lutheran, Jeanne and the girls attended Mass on Sundays at St. John Vianney without him. When they arrived home, they usually found Bill cooking bacon and eggs, with fresh bought doughnuts on the table so they could break the fast they had had to maintain to receive Communion at church. Usually among the doughnuts there was as least one jelly-filled doughnut with icing on top that the kids called "bleaners". Don't ask why.

Bill's brother Harold passed away 3 January 1960. 63 years old at the time of his death, he was a General Motors employee.[32]

Harold and Margaret Agnes Hathorn Schachtschneider, undated photo. In collection of the author.

Incapacitation Following a Stroke

Bill was involved with the formation of the union for the employees of the Rock County Highway Department. Mary Schachtschneider remembers that he worked with a lawyer in Madison (perhaps Gaylord Nelson) when the union was in its formative stage.

Bill was a representative for the Highway Department when a credit union was established for the employees of Rock County in 1953.[33] He was re-elected to the Rock County Credit Union Employee Committee in 1956.[34] In February 1961 Bill is named as a holdover member on the Credit Union Committee.[35] In February 1965 it was announced that Bill was elected to a 3-year term on the Credit Union Employee Committee having already served twelve years in this capacity.[36] Unfortunately, in early March of 1965 Bill suffered a severe CVA (stroke) following an operation to repair an eardrum that had been punctured by a welding spark at work. He was never able to work after this stroke and was replaced on the committee.

Bill recuperated at the Wood Veteran Facility in West Allis, Wisconsin after his stroke. There he met a wonderful man named Rudolph Ball who eased his transition to this rehabilitation setting. Eventually Bill was able to come home and, with the help of a Visiting Nurse, was able to navigate the stairs of the 2-story home on Racine Street to be able to access the only bathroom in the house and his bedroom. He never was able to return to work secondary to the residual paralysis and aphasia caused by the stroke. Louise and Gena were in charge of coming

[32] H. A. Schachtschneider, *Janesville Daily Gazette,* 3 January 1960, obituary.
[33] "County Employes Form Credit Union", *Janesville Daily Gazette,* 19 August 1953, page 21, col. 1
[34] "County Employes Rename Officers of Credit Union", *Janesville Daily Gazette,* 2 February 1956, page 30, col. 3.
[35] "Directors Chosen at County Credit Union Meeting", *Janesville Daily Gazette,* 28 February 1961, page 2, col. 1
[36] "County Employes (sic) Credit Union Has $170,000 in Assets", *Janesville Daily Gazette*, 16 FEB 1965, page 2, col. 1

home from elementary school to make lunch for their dad. They were enrolled in elementary school at St. John Vianney Catholic Church which was only a few doors away from the Racine Street home.

Bill died at Mercy Hospital 29 March 1968 after suffering a severe myocardial infarction (heart attack) at home three years after his stroke. A wake was held at the Whitcomb funeral home on Main Street in Janesville. A Catholic funeral was given by Fr. Carlton at St. John Vianney Church. This was a special occurrence since Bill was Lutheran and was not a member of the church, but he and Father Carlton were great friends. When the family arrived at the church there was a line of student nurses in uniforms and capes in front of the church to provide an honor guard. These students were from Mercy Hospital School of Nursing where Jeanne was employed as an instructor. The church was full as all the school children were in attendance as well as friends and relatives of the family. Bill was buried at Milton Lawns cemetery located on Milton Avenue in Janesville.

<u>Pocket biography</u>

August William Schachtschneider

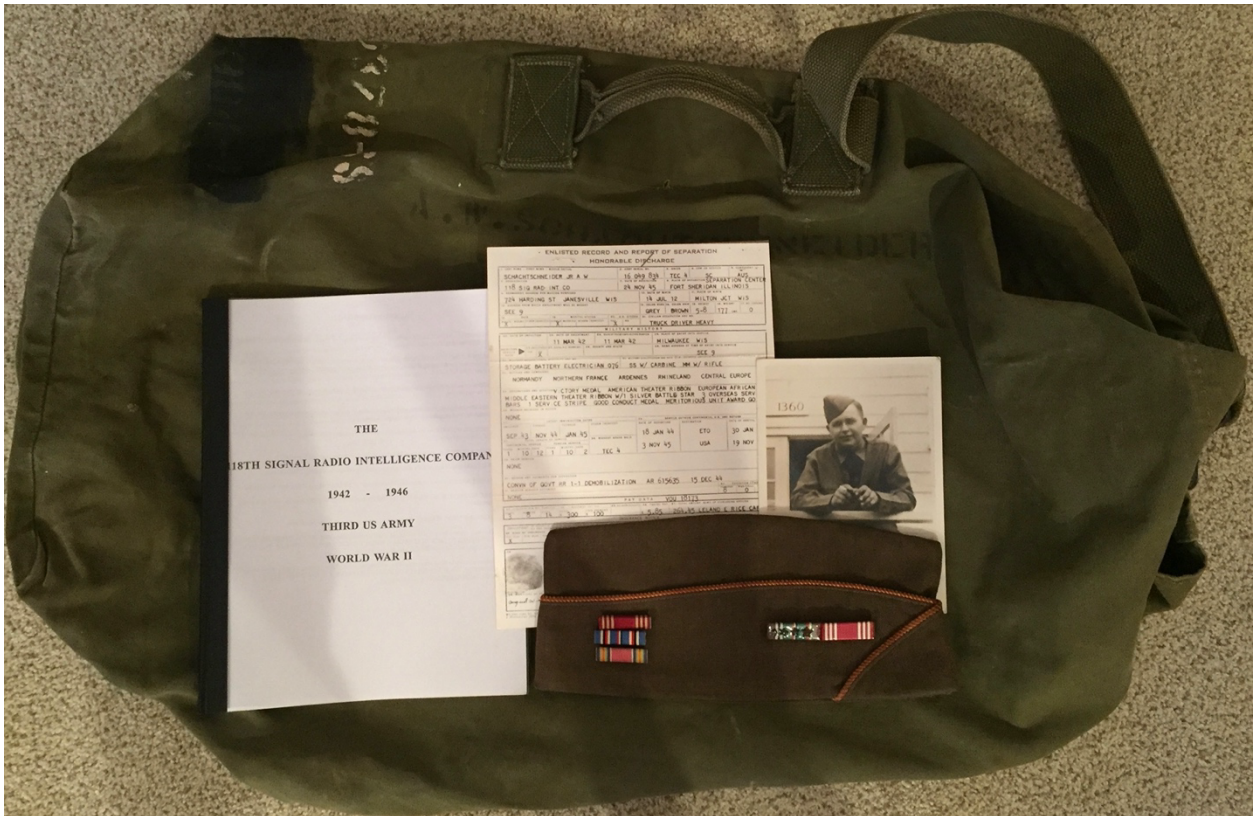
Born: 14 July 1912, Fulton Township, Rock, Wisconsin
Baptized: 20 October 1912, St. John Lutheran Church, Janesville, Rock, Wisconsin
Marriage: 12 October 1946, St. Patrick Catholic Church Rectory, Janesville, Rock, Wisconsin

1. Jeanne Elizabeth Kauffman
    a. Born: 16 October 1917, Janesville, Rock, Wisconsin
    b. Baptism: 28 October 1917, St. Patrick Catholic Church, Janesville, Rock, Wisconsin
    c. Died: 27 December 1987, Janesville, Rock, Wisconsin
2. Children: Mary Corita (b. 8 July 1948); Gena Rose (29 September 1952); Louise Ellen (9 May 1954)

Died: 29 March 1968, Janesville, Rock, Wisconsin

Prepared by Gena Schachtschneider 9 February 2020; edited and expanded November 2021, edited April 2023.
Email: gsch84@hotmail.com

August William “Bill” Schachtschneider, probably 1942



Duffel bag, DD214, Garrison cap with medals, photo of Bill Schachtschneider. In collection of author.

Also included in photo is unit history: DeGrote, John W., The 118th Signal Radio Intelligence Company, 1942-1946, Third US Army, World War II, self-published; copy obtained from The George Marshall Foundation (https://marshallfoundation.org). Unknown publication date.

Appendix A

Company Movements: 118th Signal Intelligence Corps, World War II (See map)

Abstracted from : DeGrote, John W., The 118th Signal Radio Intelligence Company, 1942-1946, Third US Army, World War II, self-published; copy obtained from The George Marshall Foundation (https://marshallfoundation.org). Unknown publication date.

Additional notes from Unit Morning Reports, accessed at NARA St. Louis, 11 Mar 2020 (microfilm)

1944

18 Jan	Left U.S. on M.S. Ocean Mail (motor ship)
29 Jan	Arrived Greenock, Scotland
30 Jan	Arrived by train at Uttoxeter, Staffordshire, England
9 Feb	Moved to Dartford, Kent (unable to locate on map) (Morning Report: Accessed at NARA St. Louis, 11 MAR 2020; located at Bergman Osterberg College in Dartford, Kent)
March	A detachment of the 118th was in London, Middlesex for months of March and April (Morning Report: accessed at NARA St. Louis 11 MAR 2020, File no. 25090)
28-30 APR	Alerted for Departure is in Morning Report each morning (accessed at NARA St. Louis 11 MAR 2020, File no. 14027, reel no. 14.55)
31 May	Left Dartford for Seaton, Devon
5 Jun	(Accessed at NARA St. Louis 11 MAR 2020, Morning report, File no. 24253, reel no. 3.105. Left Bergman Osterberg College Dartford Kent at 0755. Arrived at Seaton Devon at 1755. Still on "Alerted-For-Departure)
6 Jun	Invasion: Operation Overlord. General Bradley's First Army took Cotentin Peninsula (Cherbourg)
5 Jul	Forward echelons of Patton's 3rd Army began trip to France
10 Jul	118th Left Seaton, Devon and traveled by motor convoy to Penzance, Cornwall (accessed at NARA St. Louis 11 MAR 2020, File no. 17908, Reel no. 10.172 area called "Marshalling Area Redruth"
12 Jul	Left Marshalling Area Redruth to point of embarkation, Falmouth, boarded transport for secret destination (accessed at NARA St. Louis 11 MAR 2020, Morning Report, File no. 17908, reel no. 10.172)
13 Jul	Ship left port to cross English Channel. Weighed anchor at 0655 (accessed at NARA St. Louis 11 MAR 2020, Morning report, File no. 17908) 2-day trip on miserable Liberty Ship. No kitchen, no bedding, little room to lie down.
14 Jul	Arrived Utah Beach
15 Jul	(Accessed at NARA St. Louis 11 MAR 2020, Morning report, File no. 17908: Dropped anchor at Utah Beach at 1630. Debarked at Utah Beach and arrived at Transport Area "B" (Area 13) at 0230.) Unloaded ship and moved 35 miles to area near village of St. Pierre d'Artheglise
16 Jul	Left Transport area "B" at 1800 by convoy arrived at (09-98) Special Map Cherbourgh Peninsula at 2100
17 Jul	118th became fully operational. After this date the 118th would move on the same day as "Lucky Forward" (General Patton's field headquarters) and would

	be located 1-5 miles from their location until the war against Germany ended. Located at Nehou, just outside St.-Sauveur-le-Vicomte
31 Jul	Arrived at Map Coordinate (T2359) at 2000 (accessed at NARA St. Louis 11 MAR 2020, Morning report, File no. 17908)
1 Aug	Third Army, under Patton, became officially activated
2 Aug	118th set up operations in new area 4 miles north of Coutances. Convoy included 8-2 ½ ton trucks of Intercept Platoon, 3 of them pulling PE-95 power supply trailers. There followed this group another PE-95 (4 altogether). PE-95 was 6-cylinder GMC gasoline engine which drove 115-volt generator. Bill was part of the motor pool (as well as PE-95 maintenance). He would have driven a truck, but not for Intercept Platoon. (see page 24)
5 Aug	Company moved to between Granville and LaHaye, 7 miles NW of Avranches. 1st night there, German air raid bombed ammunition dump across and just down the road from the 118th.
7 Aug	Hitler launched massive counterattack between Mortain and Vire to north of Avranches (Mortain counter-offensive)
8 Aug	(Accessed at NARA St. Louis 11 MAR 2020, Morning report, File no. 18235, moved to map coordinates 354887. Report of death of Gerard A Goulette, vehicle accident)
12 Aug	Moved south and then east a distance of 23 miles and set up between St- Ouen-des-Toits and Andourille, 5 miles NW of Lavel.
14 Aug	Moved 38 miles, set up 4 miles NW of LeMans near village of LaMilles
20 Aug	Moved from LeMans area (55 miles) to 15 miles SW of Chartres near Breu
25 Aug	Moved 45 miles east, near village of Courey, 5 miles west of Pithiviers, 35 miles south of Paris. Paris was liberated this day.
30 Aug	Moved 60 miles, East through Pithiviers, through Sens to village Thorigney-sur-Oreuse (Morning report accessed at NARA St. Louis places them at Chalons, 8 mi. E, coordinates T-6544, Map 1:50,000)
4 Sep	Moved 85 miles to near L'Epine near Reims. While operating in this area men were taken to Lucky Forward to see Bing Crosby and Dinah Shore. (Left at 0940, arrived at 1430 according to Morning Report, NARA St. Louis, microfilm reel no. 10.206, Report number 24413)
15 Sep	Moved to Braquis, 12 miles east of Verdun (Morning Report accessed at NARA St. Louis states arrived at station 4 mi S of Etain Map Coordinates (U-4763) at 1430. Left at 0930; accessed 10 MAR 2020; Microfilm reel no. 10.206, File number 24413)
12 Oct	Moved at night in blackout conditions to Houdemont, France (South of Nancy) 3 ½ miles S, Coordinates U-8505, Map 1:50,000
3 Dec	Record of Events (Morning Report accessed NARA St. Louis, 10 MAR 2020) "Meritorious Service Unit Plaque awarded this organization per Section IV, GO#102 Headquarters, Third United States Army, dtd 3 December 44."
4 Dec	Company assembled and given unit citation for "Meritorious Service"
24 Dec	Moved to just outside village of Strassen, Luxembourg (NARA record shows them 2 ½ miles W, Coordinate P-8015, Map 1:50,000; arrived by convoy at 1430)

By 28 Jan — The "Bulge" had been eliminated. 1st and 3rd Armies (Bradley and Patton) combined had pushed the Germans back.

1945

27 Mar — Moved to Trier, Germany. Orders included "no fraternization with German civilians". (Morning report from NARA St. Louis states they moved to 3 mi W of Oberstein-arrived 1340)

29 Mar — To Idar-Oberstein

3 Apr — Moved to north edge of Frankfurt-Am-Main

11 Apr — Moved near town of Wurstfeld (8 miles from Bad-Hersfeld) (In Morning Report accessed at NARA (St. Louis) noted to be 5 mi. SE of Hersfeld; accessed 10 MAR 2020)

22 Apr — Moved to city of Erlangen (10 miles north of Nuremburg, 38 miles from Czechoslovakia). Billeted in homes from which occupants were forced to leave.

2 May — Moved to Regensburg (Arrived Erlangen at 1655; left 5 mi SE Hersberg at 0745; accessed at NARA (St. Louis))

8 May — War in Germany ended. Company remained in operation until 5 days later.

13 May — Ceased operations. Moved to Rosenheim (35 miles SE of Munich; just off map). Published a camp paper-"Bavarian Clarion"

18 Aug — Moved to village of Zipf, Austria (Just off map, south of Passau, Germany) (accessed at NARA St. Louis 11 MAR 2020, File no. 22219, reel no. 5.642; 4 mi. SE Frankenburg, map coordinates WV-2953)

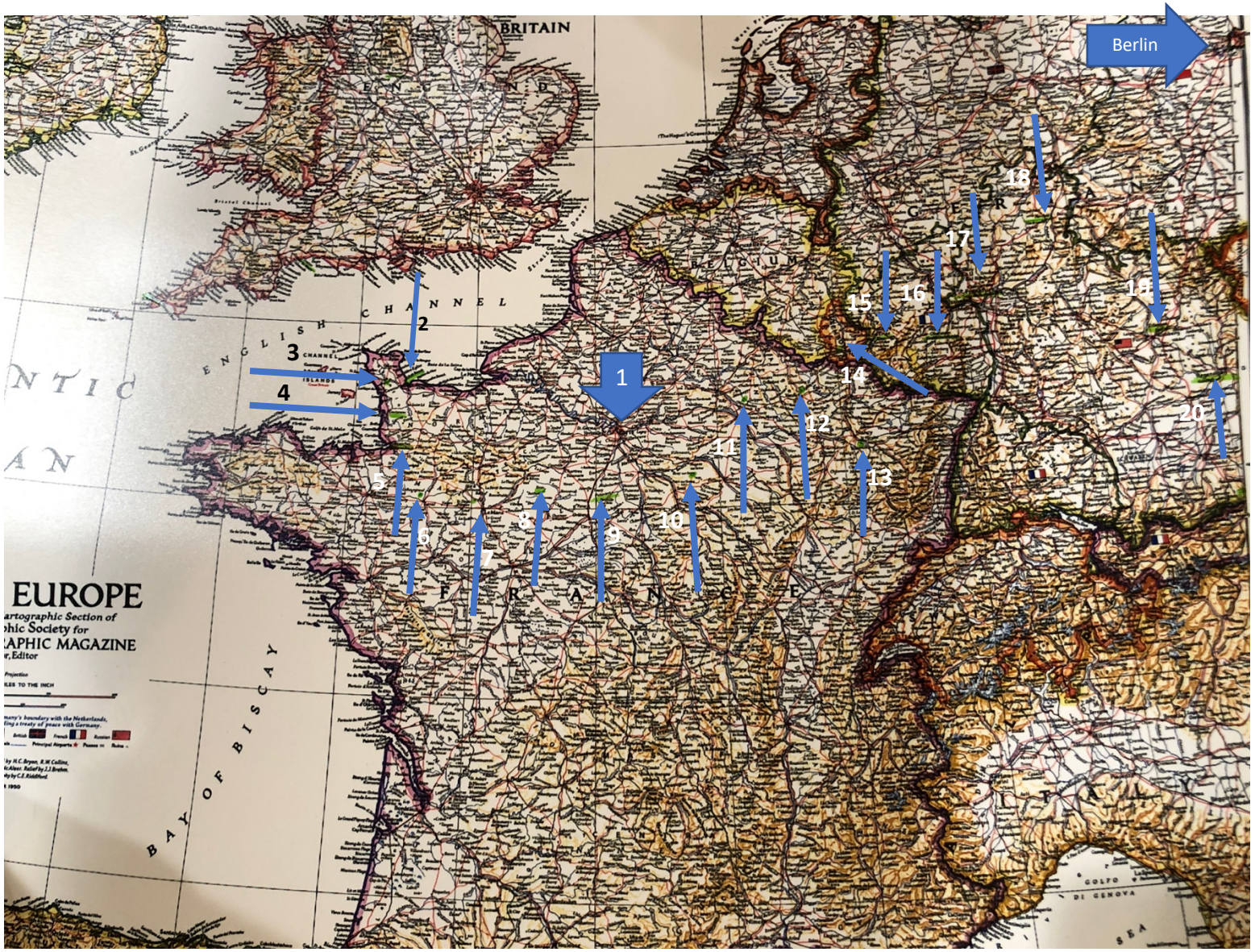
17 Sep — Fol named EM are trfd fr 118th Radio Intelligence Co to 202d FA Bn. WP. Travel by Govt MT is atzd. PCS. TDN. No per diem. ELCMR 21 Sep 45. (Accessed at NARA St. Louis 11 MAR 2020, Morning Report, File no. 27162, reel no. 20.534) August Schachtschneider and Lewis R Roenneburg is included in this group. (Following named Enlisted Men are transferred from 118th Radio Intelligence Company to 202nd Field Artillery Battalion. Travel by Government Military Transport is authorized. PCS=Permanent change of station TDN=Travel directed as necessary. Effective date of change of morning report 21 SEP 1945.

Early October, men started to be sent home. By about a month later all men had left Zipf except for a few officers. Men boarded 40+8 box cars for 3 day ride to Furth, suburb of Nuremburg. Virtually every man of the company was home for Christmas, 1945.

Dad reached New York on the "S.S. Helen Hunt Jackson" Saturday, November 17, 1945. (Article from Janesville Daily Gazette, 19 NOV 1945)

Lewis Roenneburg went on furlough in Jul 1945 (accessed at NARA St. Louis 11 MAR 2020, File no. 26433, reel no. 10.538)

Accessed at NARA St. Louis 11 MAR 2020, File no. 00795, Reel no. 8.69 Nov 1943, located at Vintage Hill Farms Station, Warrenton, VA.



1. Paris; 2. Utah Beach (14 July); 3. Vicomte (17 July); 4. Coutances (2 August); 5. Avranche (5 August); 6. Lavel (12 August); 7. LeMans (14 August); 8. Breu (20 August); 9. Pithiviers (25 August); 10. Thorigney-sur-Oreuse (30 August); 11. Near Reims (4 September); 12. Braquis, east of Verdun (15 September); 13. Houdemont (12 October); 14. Strassen, Luxembourg (24 December); 15. Trier, Germany (27 March 1945); 16. Oberstein (29 March); 17. Frankfurt (3 April); 18. Hersfeld (11 April); 19. Erlangen (22 April); 20. Regensberg (2 May), 8 May, war in Germany ended